

lost the left ear and first finger of his left hand. They apparently recognized the clothes and the body, and gave vent to expressions of grief on the event. Subsequent doubts in the mind of one sister were overruled by the confident affirmations of the other. The funeral took place accordingly, and was attended by the daughters and friends of the supposed deceased lawyer. Returning from the funeral, the boatman of the ferry which they had to cross asked them for whom they were in mourning, and upon receiving their answer, laughingly informed them that he had, only half an hour before, ferried their father over alive and well, and directed them where they would find him; which, to their great joy, proved to be true. Whose was the body they had buried in the churchyard at Drumoak has not been discovered.—*Brit. and For. Med.-Chir. Rev.* from *Edinburgh Monthly Journal*, February, 1854.

62. *Recovery after taking a large Dose of Prussic Acid.*—Mr. W. H. BURNAM, of Wath-upon-Deane, has communicated to the *Lancet* a very interesting history of the recovery of his father from accidental poisoning by prussic acid. The following abstract is from the *Brit. and For. Med.-Chir. Rev.*, April of this year. Mr. Burnam, Sr., took by mistake a drachm of Scheele's acid instead of diluted acid. In a few seconds, he perceived by the bottle the mistake he had made; he immediately swallowed half an ounce of aromatic spirit of ammonia, with a little water, and then called to his son and told him what had occurred. He spoke hurriedly, and breathed deeply. Mr. W. H. Burnam immediately administered some solution of crystals of sulphate of iron, trusting to the ammonia previously swallowed for the formation of an insoluble compound of the acid with the oxides of iron. This was two minutes after the poison had been swallowed; from this time, for twenty minutes, Mr. Burnam had no recollection of anything that was taking place. Respiration became deeper and slower. Four minutes after taking the poison, cold douche was freely employed, and more solution of sulphate of iron with spirits of ammonia administered. Vomiting took place; a slight convulsive shudder occurred; the cold effusion was persevered in, with the occasional administration of spirits of ammonia. In twenty minutes he began to exhibit signs of returning consciousness. In about fifteen minutes later, he was able to walk up stairs to bed. Perfect recovery took place. The patient was about sixty years of age, and of a strong constitution.

By chemical analysis, Mr. W. H. Burnam found that the quantity of the acid which his father had taken contained 2.4 grains of anhydrous acid. Mr. Burnam observes, that this is the largest recorded quantity taken, and followed by recovery. It is also a matter of interest in this case, that the time at which insensibility came on is so exactly known, viz. two minutes after the poison was swallowed.

63. *Upon the Legal and Social Rights of Malformed Beings.*—Dr. J. BIERBAUM states that all imperfectly developed beings may be divided into monstrosities and the malformed. Under the term monstrosity, the author understands only those who cannot maintain individual existence when separated from the mother, and whose death is therefore occasioned by birth. The malformed, on the other hand, can enter upon life in spite of their imperfect development, even although the term of existence should not be long. Lawyers make a distinction between monsters and partenta, or ostenta. The former are born of a woman, but possess no human head, rather that of some lower animal, and hence are regarded as scarcely human. Portenta, or ostenta, are those having, indeed, a human head, but imperfectly developed or deformed. To this class belong all those beings with badly formed organs of generation, or with an abnormal number of limbs. Such beings acquire not only the rights which belong to men, but entail, when they die, the same rights upon others. The first glance will show that such an arrangement leads to fallacies and difficult questions. Every sort of monstrosity has a right to baptism if it lives. The canon law which deprives monsters, the produce of intercourse with beasts (!), of baptism, admits of the following formula in doubtful cases: "Si tu es homo te baptizo." When twins are united together by some bond of attachment,

either they have each an individual existence, or one is dependent for life upon the other. Both are entitled to baptism. The canon law directs, in the second baptism, the use of the words, "If you be not already baptized, I now baptize you," &c. The right to nourishment and support belongs to all monstrosities as long as they live. To take away the faint expression of life may be a punishable offence, but cannot under any circumstances amount to murder. The right to be considered as belonging to this or to that sex comes into consideration at the period of baptism, education, doubtful paternity, the possibility of marriage. Cases are upon record in which both external and internal organs of generation were wanting. A complete hermaphrodite never existed; but there is often an imperfect condition of the sexual organs which renders the question difficult of decision. The Prussian law gives to the parents the right of determining the point as regards education; but after the age of eighteen the individual may form a separate conclusion.—*Med. Times and Gaz.* May 27, 1854, from *Henke's Zeitschrift*, xxxiv. 1, 1854.

MISCELLANEOUS.

64. *Meteorological Changes in relation to Epidemic Diseases.*—Dr. RICHARDSON read before the Epidemiological Society (March 6, 1854) a paper written by himself and Dr. MOFFATT on this subject. The authors opened the subject by referring to the labours of Hippocrates, Sydenham, Arbutnot, and some other writers, and then passed on to consider, 1st. The general influence of the seasons; and, 2d. The connection that exists between epidemical diseases, and the following meteorological conditions—temperature, humidity of the atmosphere, electric conditions of the atmosphere, the force and directions of the wind, and the presence of agents supposed to be foreign to the atmosphere.

As the result of their labours, the authors have arrived at the following conclusions:—

1. That all those diseases which prevail at certain periods in a marked degree, and at other periods are as markedly absent, should be called epidemical; or, in other words, that the idea of the communicability of a disease should not alone and solely carry with it the idea of an epidemic disease.

2. That the influence of the seasons on all the epidemic diseases is so marked, that a series of laws bearing on this subject might easily be wrought out from observations sufficiently correct and extensive.

3. That, according to the observations of Dr. Moffat, the maximum of all diseases takes place when the wind is in the South, or equatorial, or ozone, points of the compass; and the minimum, when it is in the North, or polar points, or points where ozone is absent.

4. That the maximum of diseases for individual points of the compass occurs at N. W. and S. E.

5. That some diseases are almost peculiar to certain points of the compass.

6. That temperature does not seem to exert so much direct influence over diseases, as do the changes indicated by the oscillations of the barometer.

7. That ozone presents itself at certain periods, and, as it would seem, under the influence of particular laws; that certain diseases are peculiar to ozone periods, but that it need not be inferred that ozone gives rise, *per se*, to those diseases.

8. That the greatest number of diseases (according to Dr. Moffat's observations) take place with a medium degree of humidity of the atmosphere; and the greatest number of deaths with a minimum degree of humidity.

9. That the force of the horizontal movement of the wind would seem, from Mr. Richardson's present observations, to exert no influence on the spread of disease.

10. That, in order to arrive at precise results as to the effects of meteorological changes on epidemic diseases, observations both of meteorological pheno-